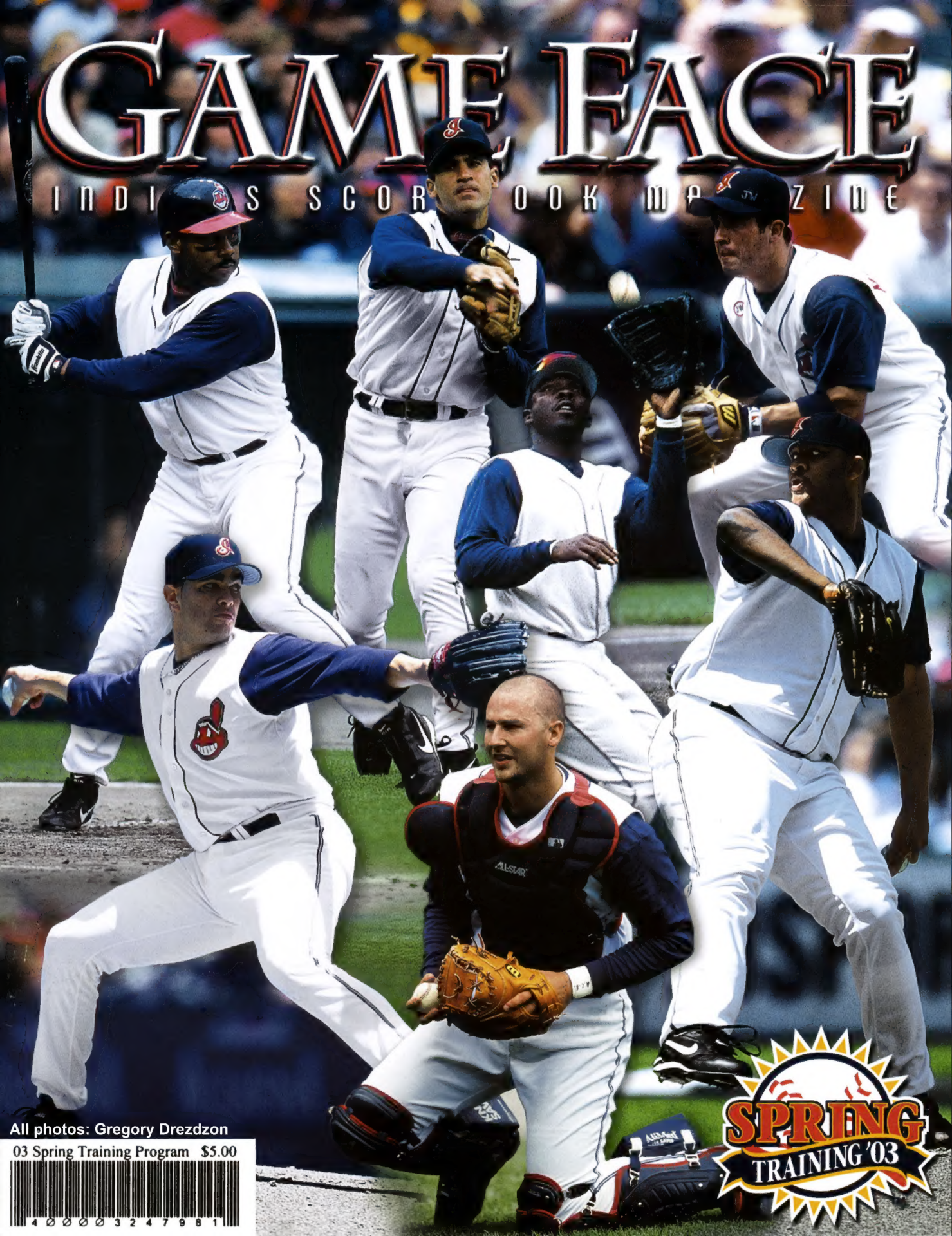


# GAME FACE

INDIANS SCOREBOOK MAGAZINE



**SPRING**  
TRAINING '03

All photos: Gregory Drezdron

03 Spring Training Program \$5.00







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# Making an Impact

by Steve Herrick

Indians general manager Mark Shapiro says he could go on all day about Eric Wedge. It's easy to see why Shapiro thinks Wedge, the youngest manager in the Major Leagues at 35 years old, is the perfect fit for the Indians, who will be one of the youngest teams in baseball this season.

"The reason why we felt Eric was the right choice was I feel confident he is a difference-maker," Shapiro said. "There are a few managers on that board that when they get in that dugout and on that field, they can make a difference. They give their teams an edge. They give their teams an advantage. You know they're going to have a chance to impact a game and a season. I'm confident that Eric will be a difference-maker for us in our transition and beyond."

One doesn't have to spend much time with Wedge, who has managed in the Indians farm system the last five years, to see how much he loves the game. He was ready to go on October 29, the day he was hired. To say Wedge is enthusiastic would be understating his zest for baseball.

As he sat in his Jacobs Field office in January, he probably would have organized a game, even though the temperature was in the 20s and snow covered the field, if someone asked him to.

"I'm very passionate about the job," he said. "I'm very passionate about baseball. We will show up and we will find a way to get it done. We'll get out there and get after it, day in and day out."

Wedge, who was a catcher his entire career, thinks the fact he has never forgotten what it's like to be a player, will help him as a manager.

"I'm passionate about my players," he said. "I'll have their back through thick and thin. I promised myself a couple of things when I began managing. I'll never forget what it feels like to be a ballplayer. It's about the players. It's not about me."

Wedge grew up in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and had a stellar college career at Wichita State University. The Shockers made it to the College World Series in his sophomore year and won it in his junior year. Wedge began his professional career in 1989 after being selected in the third round of the Amateur Draft by Boston. He made his Major League debut on October 5, 1991 and singled in his first at-bat against Milwaukee.

"Jack Clark was supposed to hit, but he told the manager to let me get an at-bat," said Wedge. "I remember thinking I wasn't that nervous. I was excited. I had the adrenaline flowing."



Photo: Gregory Drezdson



*Pictured left: the Tribe's new manager, Eric Wedge, in his office at Jacobs Field; right: on the field at Wichita State.*

Wedge hit all five of his Major League homers in 27 games for the Red Sox the following season. He was drafted by the Colorado Rockies in the November, 1992 Expansion Draft in the second round (48th pick overall). Wedge appeared in nine games for the Rockies during their inaugural year, but spent most of the 1993 season on the disabled list with elbow problems. He was released by the Rockies at the end of Spring Training in 1994 and re-signed with the Red Sox on May 2. Wedge appeared in 77 games in Class AAA Pawtucket and his final two games in the big leagues. Wedge spent the next three seasons in the Minors before retiring. A total of eight surgeries (two on each knee and four on his right elbow) cut his career short.

Wedge made the decision to retire midway through the 1997 season when he was playing for Scranton-Wilkes Barre, the Class AAA team of the Philadelphia Phillies.

"I was walking up the steps to the clubhouse after a game one day and it hit me," he said. "I knew what I would have to go through to get ready to play. I called my agent and told him I'd finish off this season and that would be it."

Wedge isn't one to look behind him, so he has nothing but good memories of his playing career.

"It was very frustrating (because of the injuries), but I don't have any regrets," he said. "I felt good about what I was able to do on the field. I felt I made the most out of what I had."

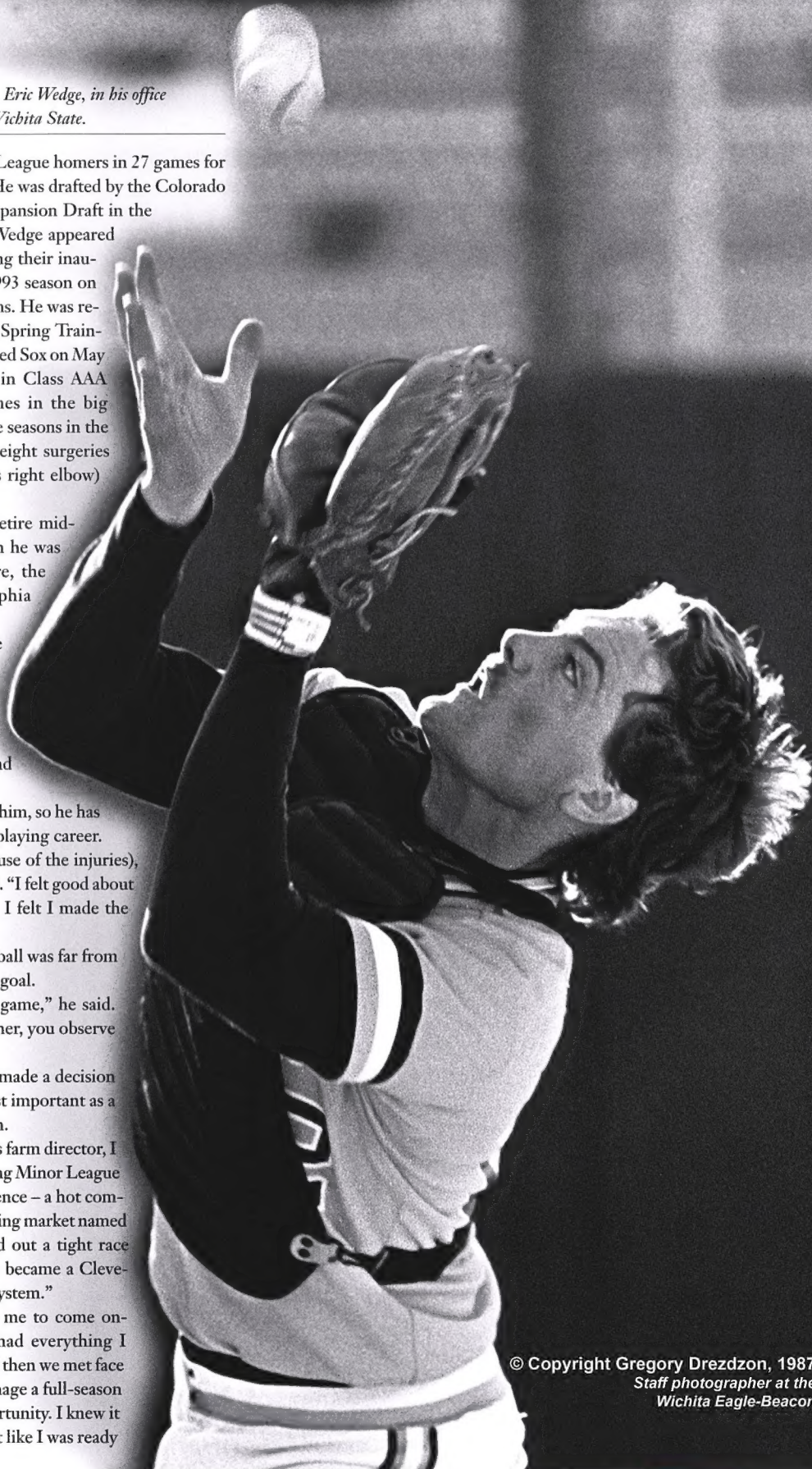
However, Wedge's time in baseball was far from over. Being a manager was his next goal.

"I was always a student of the game," he said. "My position called for it. As a catcher, you observe everything that happens."

After the 1997 season, Shapiro made a decision that turned out to be one of his most important as a member of the Indians organization.

"About six years ago, when I was farm director, I waged a free-agent battle for a retiring Minor League player with some big-league experience – a hot commodity on the Minor League managing market named Eric Wedge," Shapiro said. "I eked out a tight race with the Philadelphia Phillies. Eric became a Cleveland Indians manager in our farm system."

"I talked to Mark. He wanted me to come on-board," said Wedge. "Cleveland had everything I wanted. I knew Mark a little bit, and then we met face to face. He gave me a chance to manage a full-season team right away. It was a great opportunity. I knew it would be a great challenge, but I felt like I was ready for it."



© Copyright Gregory Drezdson, 1987  
Staff photographer at the  
Wichita Eagle-Beacon





"I'm going to rely on their experience," he said. "They've been playing for a lot of years."

Pirates manager Lloyd McClendon, 43, had been the youngest manager in the Majors. Wedge is the second-youngest manager in club history, behind Lou Boudreau, who was 24 when he became the club's player-manager in 1942.

Wedge and his wife, Kate, were married in November. Kate is a native of Buffalo and the two met while he managed there. They will make their year-round home in Westlake.

Wedge is excited about the new era the Indians are embarking upon.

"We're going to have some ups and downs here in the next year or two, but rest assured we're going to move in the right direction," he said. "Whether we win or lose on that particular day, we have to make sure we are moving forward. We need to build a foundation."

Shapiro believes Wedge is the right man to lead the Indians into their new era.

"Eric possesses the qualities and attributes that I think in today's game are essential," said Shapiro. "He's got a work ethic that's tireless and a never-ending pursuit of excellence."

Not to mention a passion for the game that his players and Indians fans are about to get a long look at.

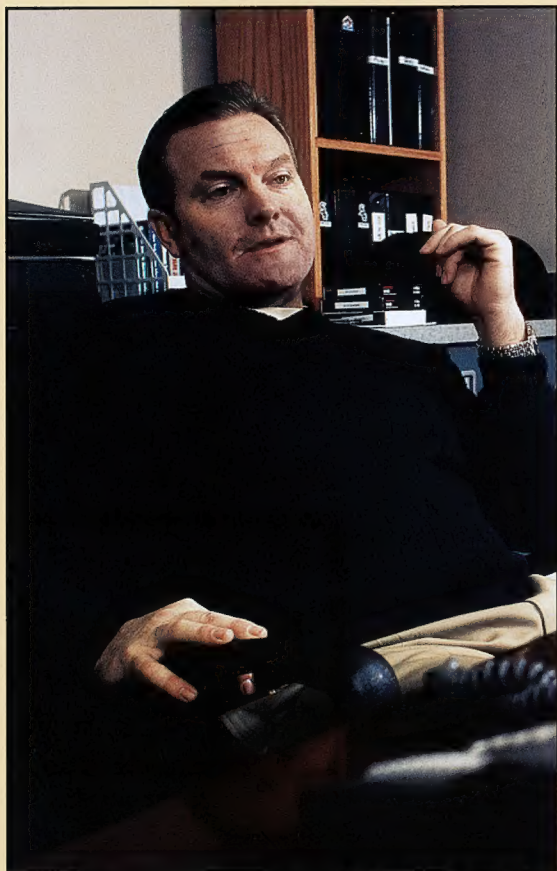
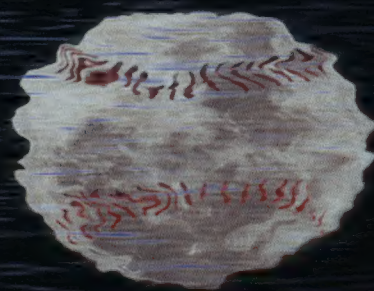


Photo: Gregory Drezdzn

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## Our Plan for Your Team: Rebuilding the Indians for Another Sustained Championship Run

*The Indians and their fans have set a high standard over the last decade – perennial post-season contention; an All-Star-laden lineup playing before large crowds; and an organization that takes its stewardship of Cleveland's team very seriously. Together, the team and the fans, with their historic support, fueled one of the great runs in recent Major League Baseball history.*

*Inevitably, there comes a time to rebuild – to restock the farm system, and ultimately the Major League roster, with waves of young, exciting players who will become the core group of athletes representing a new generation of competitiveness and enthusiasm.*

*In Cleveland, that time is now, and the Indians have moved decisively to accelerate the process of rebuilding for another sustained championship run. When organizations are slow to recognize the need to rebuild, years of mediocrity follow. Some respond by starting from scratch, hoping the amateur draft proves productive within a seven to 10-year period that is the standard in baseball.*

*But the Indians, your team, have a strategic plan they believe will create the next generation of players who will be the foundation for another sustained championship run in the not-too-distant future.*

# BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS

## The Next Phase

### Our Strategy

Our plan can be summed up as the following: The club is stockpiling talented young prospects and developing them rapidly

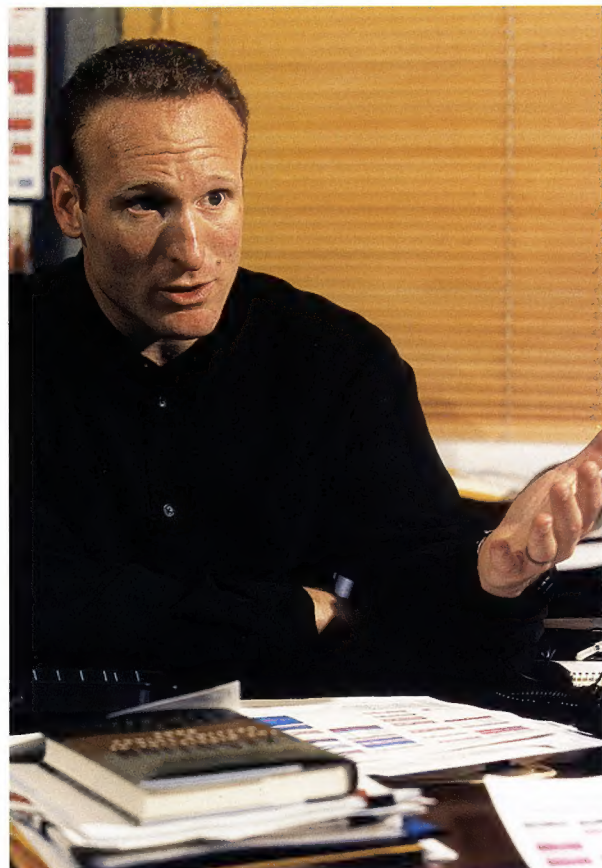


Photo: Gregory Drezdson

"The [General Manager Mark Shapiro's] deals and scouting director John Mirabelli's drafts have the farm system looking as good as it has in years. [Pictured left] Shapiro's trades haven't been popular, but he couldn't have done a better job of adding prospects."

*Jim Callis, Baseball America Online*

throughout a first-class farm system, so they can soon become contributors – some of them, stars – at the Major League level.

Many of our newly acquired prospects (more than 20 since June 2001), along with the top homegrown players, are enjoying success in the Minor Leagues. We have created a strategic developmental plan for each young player which will help identify the athletes who will ultimately make up the core group of players to anchor our next sustained championship run. This approach is similar to the highly successful *Blueprint for Success* strategy engineered during the 1990s.

We are unwavering in our commitment to Cleveland and its fans. Management is focusing on long-term success and viability, no matter how challenging the economics of Major League Baseball.

An integral element of that commitment is managing the business of baseball in a prudent manner. That is best exemplified by how we are re-investing revenues in areas that matter the most:

- Investing more than \$260 million in the Major League roster the last three years;
- Investing more than \$65 million in the scouting and player development system during those three years (representing an annual ranking in the Top 10 of all 30 MLB clubs); and



# What's in Store for 2003?

*New Indians manager Eric Wedge shares his outlook for Tribe baseball in 2003.*



Photo: Gregory Drezdson



Photo: Gregory Drezdson

I am excited to begin my first season as manager of the Cleveland Indians. It's an opportunity for my coaching staff and me to continue the development of a group of talented young players who have been in the Indians farm system or acquired over the last year by Mark Shapiro and our Baseball Operations Department in a series of shrewd trades. Those trades, while not easy to make at the time they were culminated, and our own scouting and player development system will provide the building blocks that will return us to the ranks of perennial contenders in the coming years. In addition to our young players, Mark and his staff have added a solid mix of respected veteran players who all share a strong work ethic, impeccable character, and a feeling of something to prove in 2003. Those attributes will do nothing but benefit our younger players.

Joining me during my first tour as manager in the big leagues will be Bench Coach Buddy Bell – a

*Manager Eric Wedge will be counting upon veterans like Ellis Burks (above) and Matt Lawton (left) to be role models for his youth-filled lineup.*





Photo: Gregory Drezdson

man of incredible character with a tremendous wealth of baseball knowledge. Buddy replaces Robby Thompson, who remains in the organization as a Special Assistant. In his 34 years in the game as a player, coach, and manager, Buddy has earned universal respect and credibility as a baseball man of the highest integrity. Hall-of-Famer Eddie Murray (Hitting Coach), Mike Brown (Pitching Coach), Joel Skinner (3B Coach), Luis Isaac (Bullpen Coach), and Jeff Datz (1B/Outfield Coach) all return from the 2002 Major League staff. All of them are respected baseball men who share a common passion for teaching the game.

Ellis Burks, who hit a club record (for a DH) 32 homers in 2002, will anchor our offense and will be a pillar for our young players to lean on with his leadership on the field and in the clubhouse. Omar Vizquel begins his 10th season with the Indians and continues to be one of the top all-around shortstops in the game today. Defensive wizard John McDonald will most likely open the

season at second base, while Ricky Gutierrez, coming off season-ending neck surgery in 2002, will move to third base if his health allows. The talented Brandon Phillips, the club's top-rated prospect according to *Baseball America*, will compete for a starting infield spot along with Casey Blake, Bill Selby, and Greg LaRocca. Travis Hafner, acquired from Texas in the off-season in the Einar Diaz and Ryan Drese deal, will compete with Ben Broussard to be the Opening Day first baseman. Both Hafner (who hit .342 in 2002 at AAA Oklahoma with a combined slugging/on-base percentage of 1.022) and Broussard (who won the Southern League batting

*Continued on page 22, see Manager's Prospectus*

*The Indians 2003 infield will be anchored by a familiar face in Omar Vizquel – and dazzling defense is sure to follow.*





title in 2001 and hit 19 HR combined in 2002) have posted stellar Minor League numbers.

Karim Garcia, Milton Bradley, and Matt Lawton figure to be our starting outfielders as Garcia led the entire Major Leagues in RBI with 52 after being called up from Buffalo last August. Bradley, a gifted centerfielder, showed flashes of being a solid Major League player in 2002 despite two freak stints on the disabled list. Lawton is coming off an injury-plagued 2002 season, and we believe he will return to being the healthy, energetic, productive player who earned an All-Star selection two years ago. Right-handed hitting Shane Spencer, signed in the off-season, will spell Burks at DH and both Garcia and Lawton in the outfield and will be given extended play-

ing time for the first time in his career. He could also see some time at first base against left-handed pitching. Chris Magruder, Wendell Magee, and Alex Escobar will also be given a chance to make the club as extra outfielders. Escobar is fully recovered from last year's left knee injury and is likely to start the year in the Minors as he works himself back into baseball shape.

The switch-hitting Josh Bard will be our starting catcher. Josh, who was acquired in June of 2001 in exchange for Jacob Cruz, has keen baseball instincts, a passion for the game, and the exceptional ability to call and control the game as a catcher. He impressed the staff during his six-week tenure in Cleveland last August. Tim Laker, who I have had in Buffalo the last two years, and A.J. Hinch, who spent the 2002 season in a similar role with Kansas City, will vie for the back-up catcher position. Switch-hitting prospect Victor Martinez, who's coming off consecutive league MVP and Minor League Player of the Year awards, will most likely start the year at Triple A Buffalo to afford him the chance to play everyday as part of our strategic development plan for this special player.

*Tribe fans will get many more opportunities to marvel at the defensive feats of John McDonald (facing page) in 2003.*

*Manager Eric Wedge will look to veteran leftbender Terry Mulholland (below) for long and short relief as well as an occasional spot start.*



Photo: Gregory Drezdson





## CLIFF LEE

Acquired from Montreal in the deal for Bartolo Colon, Lee shut out Minnesota on one hit over the first five innings of his big-league debut last September and went 0-1 with a 1.74 ERA overall for Cleveland. Two years ago, he averaged 10.6 strikeouts per nine innings within the Expos system. Last year, he went a combined 12-5 at three Minor League stops and was ranked by *Baseball America* as the fifth-best prospect among lefty starters (with the third-best breaking pitch). "He has good mechanics," pitching coach Mike Brown said of the former University of Arkansas star's smooth motion. "You have a

good fastball, you use it. You have a good breaking pitch, you use it. You find what works, then mix things in. Cliff seems to understand that." Said Lee, 24, whose wife is expecting their second child: "I don't just play for myself anymore. I'm serious. I have others to take care of now."

## VICTOR MARTINEZ

He won the Lou Boudreau Award as the Indians top Minor League player for 2002 when he was the Class AA Eastern League MVP and won his second straight batting title, hitting .335 with 40 doubles, 22 homers, and 85 RBI. The switch-hitter was the Class A Carolina League MVP in 2001, when he batted .329. Signed as a shortstop in 1996, he nearly cried when switched to catcher in 1998. Now, he says he loves the position. Scouts rave about his soft hands, good arm, and natural ability to put the bat on the ball. "I like to hit, but hitting is just something extra you bring to the team," Martinez said. "I am concentrating on defense. I feel more comfortable every day, but when I learn something new, it reminds me I still have a lot to learn. In baseball, as a man, I am 24 years old. As a catcher, I am just a five-year-old." He hit .281 in 32 at-bats with the Indians last September.



Photo: Gregory Drezdson

## BRANDON PHILLIPS

Acquired from Montreal as part of the deal for Bartolo Colon, scouts consider Phillips, 21, among the top prospects in all of baseball. He is an energetic player who hits line drives to all fields with gap power, steals bases, and displays defensive brilliance. Some compare him to 11-time All-Star shortstop Barry Larkin of the Reds. "He has it all," said Lou Frazier, who was Phillips' hitting coach in the Arizona Fall League. "He has great skills and always plays hard." The Indians sent Phillips to Arizona to work on converting from shortstop to second base and also to work on his discipline at the plate. Brandon turned heads with some spectacular plays at his new position during his 11-game stint with the Indians in '02. "I feel more comfortable at second base every day," he said. "I know I have a lot to learn, but I'm going to put in the work."

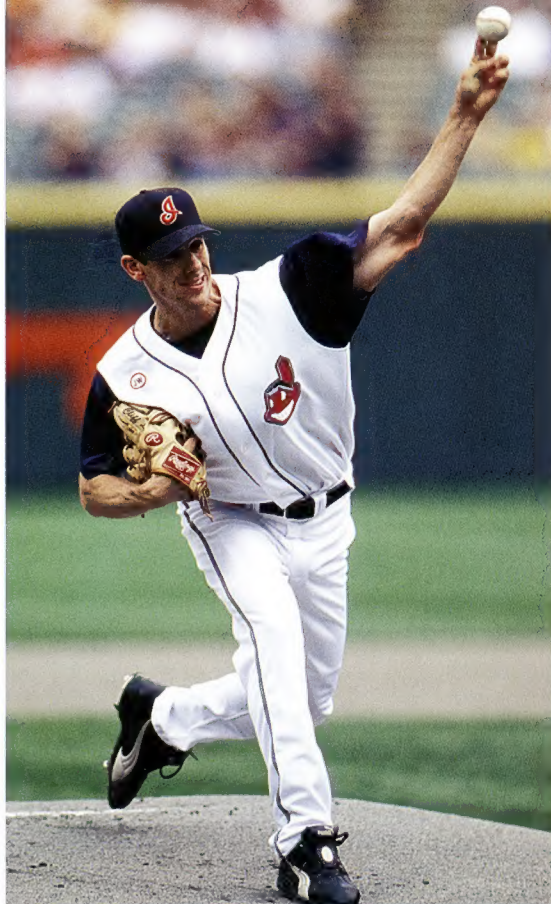
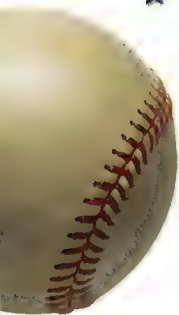


Photo: Gregory Drezdson



Photo: Gregory Drezdson





# Generation NEXT!

by Chuck Murr

*The Cleveland Indians are following their **Blueprint for Success** with an eye toward another sustained championship run. To achieve that goal, they've developed and/or traded for a number of young athletes with promising futures. Some of the members of that youth movement to watch this spring include . . .*



## DANYS BAEZ

The 25-year-old righthander lived up to advance billing the last two years with the Indians, who outbid several clubs for his prized services after he defected from Cuba in 1999. He went 5-3 with a 2.50 ERA in 43 games (all in relief) as a rookie in 2001, holding batters to a .191 average. Last year, he made 26 starts before being moved into the closer's role when Bob Wickman suffered a season-ending and career-threatening injury. "From an intensity standpoint, he's more geared to the bullpen," General Manager Mark Shapiro said. "Intellectually, he can handle anything." Baez earned a college degree in physics in Cuba. He finished with a 10-11 record and six saves in 2002, showing that his competitive nature and 95-97 mph fastball are a natural fit to the stopper's role. "Whatever they want me to do, I do," he said. "Starting or relieving, I want to be the best."



Photo: Gregory Drezdson

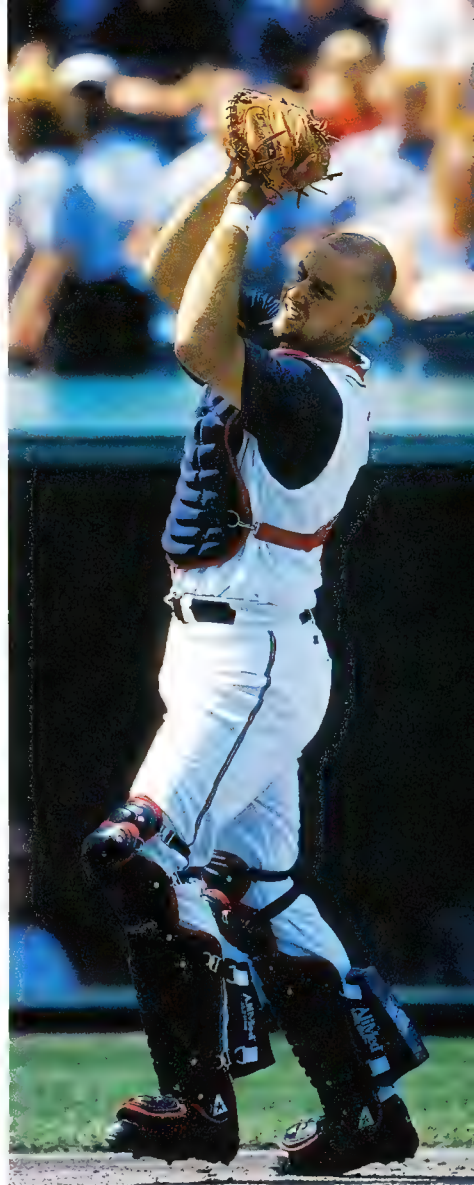


Photo: Gregory Drezdson

## JOSH BARD

Acquired from Colorado in a deal for outfielder Jacob Cruz in 2001, Bard hit a two-run, game-winning homer in the bottom of the ninth inning in his first Major League game last August. "Every guy dreams of this," he said then. "I'm just so fired up. It may never be this good again." Then he homered in his first at-bat the next day. The switch-hitter batted .297 with 26 doubles, six homers, and 53 RBI at Class AAA Buffalo to earn the promotion. He was a third-round pick in 1999 after being a two-time All-American at Texas Tech. Bard, who will turn 25 the day before the 2003 opener, averaged .275 at six Minor League stops during his first two years as a professional. A polished defensive catcher with good hands and a strong arm, scouts believe his leadership skills will help the Indians promising young pitchers make the transition to the Majors.

*Continued, please see Generation Next!, page 28*



## MILTON BRADLEY

Acquired from Montreal in 2001, scouts have long considered Bradley a "multi-tool, impact talent" and the speedy switch-hitter was always ranked among the top prospects since being drafted in the second round in 1996. He batted .249 with nine homers in 98 games in 2002 and showed exceptional defensive ability in center field for the Indians despite missing extended time with an eye injury and aching shoulder. "This is a guy who really cares," said new Indians manager Eric Wedge, who worked with Bradley at Buffalo two years ago. "He hates to fail, hates to let the team down." Bradley lists Barry Bonds, Ken Griffey Jr., and former Indians stars Orel Hershiser and Kenny Lofton as his baseball heroes. "Even though Hershiser was a pitcher, I always admired his intensity," said Bradley, who will turn 25 in April. "He was always competitive, a winner."



Photo: Gregory Drezdzon

## JASON DAVIS

The better this 6-foot-6 right-hander's fastball sinks, the more his career rises. Drafted in 1999 out of Cleveland State College (Tennessee), where he also played basketball, Davis really progressed in 2002. He went 5-0 with a 1.17 ERA over his final five starts at Class AA Akron, earning a promotion to the Majors. With the Indians, he went 1-0 with a 1.84 ERA in three outings in September. "We saw glimpses of his potential," General Manager Mark Shapiro said. "And his potential is enormous."

Davis knows he has an opportunity in Cleveland. "Pitching for the Cleveland Indians is where I want to be," the 22-year-old said. "I'm going to give everything I have to do it." Davis said that philosophy comes from watching his boyhood hero, Randy Johnson. "Growing up, I guess I liked him because of his size," Davis said. "I loved the way he looked on the mound, real intimidating."

## KARIM GARCIA

Signed at age 17 in 1992 by the Dodgers, Garcia finally delivered on what scouts have termed "unlimited potential" in 2002 for the Indians. After years of promising spurts in the Minors followed by brief and disappointing stints in Los Angeles, Arizona, Detroit, Baltimore, Cleveland (in 2001), and with the New York Yankees, the outfielder returned to the Indians last July. After a short stay at Buffalo to regain his hitting stroke (he hit .396 in 23 games), the free-swinging and free-spirited lefty drove in 52 runs in 51 games, batting .299 with 16 homers for Cleveland. "Karim didn't just have a phenomenal two months," General Manager Mark Shapiro said. "He's had two years of consistent production. He took off for Eric Wedge." That was at Buffalo in 2001, when he hit 31 homers, then bashed five more in 45 at-bats with the Indians. "I don't think it's a fluke," Shapiro said.

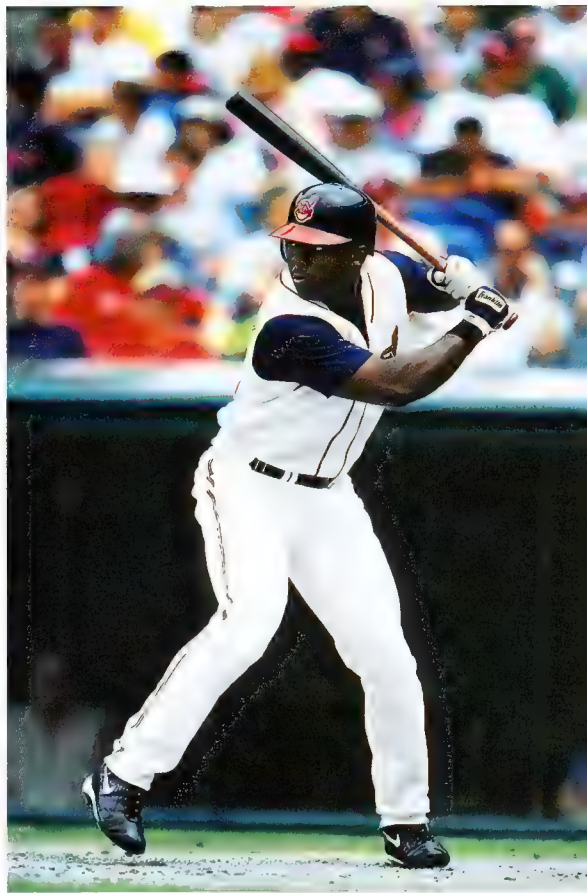


Photo: Gregory Drezdzon



Photo: Gregory Drezdzon





Photo: Gregory Drezdson

## The Tribe and Home Depot Debut "Doubleheader Days"

**E**ight high school baseball teams from the Winter Haven area will play a game following an Indians Home Exhibition Game on February 28, March 12, March 14, and March 25.

To continue the Cleveland Indians involvement and commitment to the Winter Haven community, the Tribe has invited eight local high school baseball teams (Bartow High School, Mulberry High School, Haines City High School, Kathleen High School, All Saints Academy, Sonrise High School, Lake Region High School, and Lake Placid High School) to participate in "Doubleheader Days." Each team will be given the opportunity to play at *Chain of Lakes Park* following the conclusion of the Tribe's exhibition games on February 28 vs. Pittsburgh, March 12 vs. Minnesota, March 14 vs. Los Angeles, and March 25 vs. Houston.

These "Doubleheader Days" games will enable county schools from the Winter Haven area to showcase their talents to the many Indians fans and staff in attendance on those days, while providing a memorable experience for all the high school players and staff involved.

In addition, all eight high schools are participating in a fund-raiser – selling *Indians Fun Money* and tickets to their games. *Fun Money* is redeemable for tickets, concessions, or merchandise during Spring Training this year. These schools will receive 20% of every dollar sold during the fund-raiser and the team that sells the most will get a 30 to 60-minute mini-baseball clinic provided by a few members of the Cleveland Indians Minor League Staff.



*The following is a breakdown of the "Doubleheader Days" at Chain of Lakes Park this spring:*

| DATE        | GAME 1                                    | GAME 2                      |
|-------------|---|-----------------------------|
| February 28 | Indians vs. Pittsburgh Pirates at 1:05PM  | Bartow vs. Mulberry         |
| March 12    | Indians vs. Minnesota Twins at 1:05PM     | Haines City vs. Kathleen    |
| March 14    | Indians vs. Los Angeles Dodgers at 1:05PM | All Saints vs. Sonrise      |
| March 25    | Indians vs. Houston Astros at 1:05PM      | Lake Region vs. Lake Placid |







C.C. Sabathia, at 22 years old, has won 30 games for the Indians in his first two seasons in the Majors and will anchor the starting rotation. We are looking for C.C. to sustain the same positive momentum he took into the end of the 2002 season after winning seven of his last nine decisions with a 2.54 ERA over his last 11

*Veteran reliever Mark Wohlers (below) looks to be the main setup man for closer Danys Baez in 2003.*

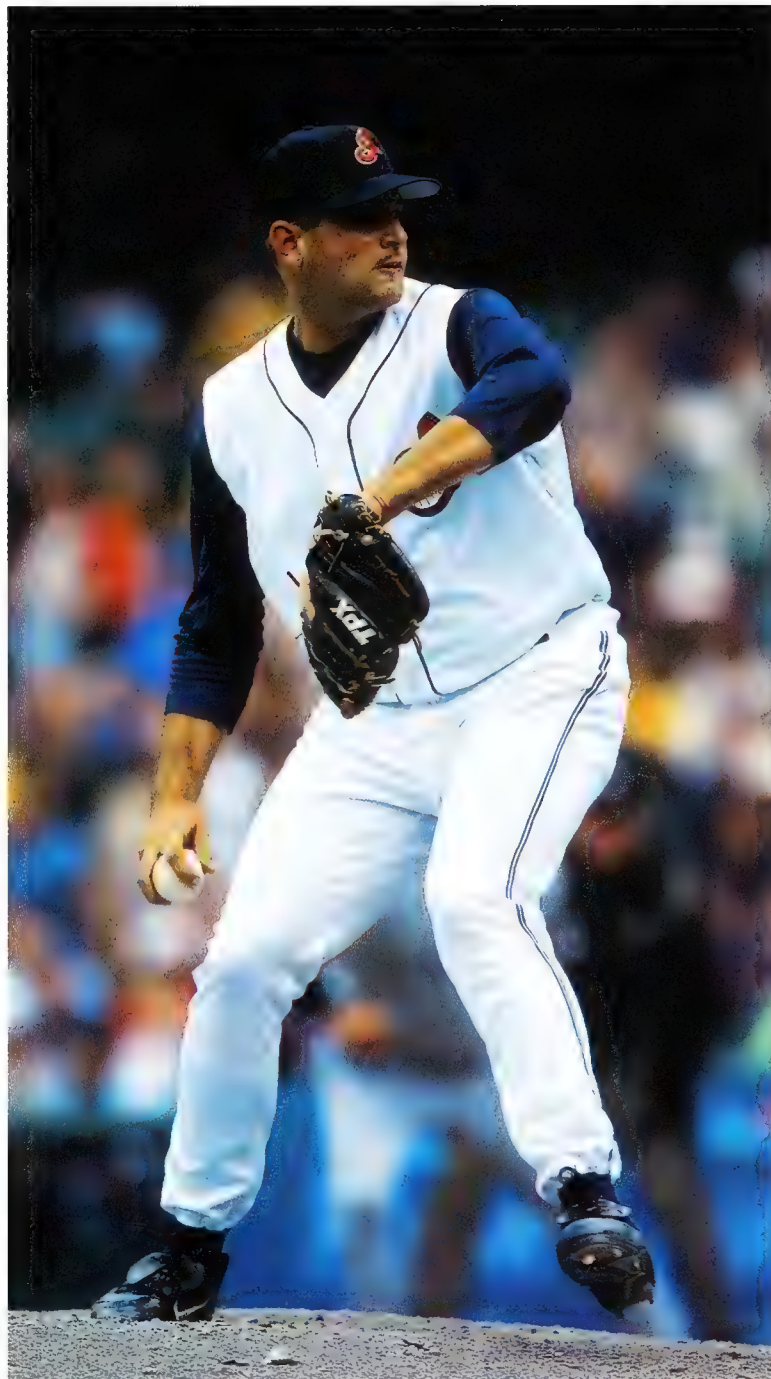


Photo: Gregory Drezdson

starts. Behind C.C. will be a pair of veterans returning to the Tribe. Geneva, OH native Brian Anderson returns to the Indians after spending the last five seasons with the Arizona Diamondbacks. Brian won 11 games in 2000 and will be joined by Jason Bere, a veteran pitcher we will be counting on to take the ball every fifth day.

The last two spots in the rotation will be determined in Spring Training as our talented group of young pitchers will battle for spots on the Opening Day roster. Ricardo Rodriguez, acquired from the Dodgers in the Paul Shuey deal, was impressive over the last six weeks of the season and figures to be a leading candidate for one of the two spots along with lefties Cliff Lee, Brian Tallet, and Billy Traber. Lee, who went a combined 12-5 in the Minors in 2002, was acquired from Montreal in the Bartolo Colon trade. Tallet (12-4 in 23 '02 Minor League starts) was the club's second-round pick in 2000 out of LSU. Traber was the club's Minor League pitcher of the year after going a combined 17-5 at Akron and Buffalo in 2002. Lee and Tallet were impressive during a pair of big-league starts last September. Hard-throwing Jason Davis started the 2002 season at Class A Kinston and advanced all the way up to the Majors to win his first Major League start in September in just his third pro season out of junior college. Mike Thurman, Jason Phillips, Jason Beverlin, and Jason Stanford are all coming to Major League camp to compete for spots on the club and figure to provide us with depth at the Triple A level.

The bullpen will be anchored by Danys Baez, who made another seamless transition from the rotation to relief last September after converting six of eight save chances – replacing the injured Bob Wickman (out for 2003). Danys has excelled as a reliever in his short career with an ERA of 2.77. Veteran Mark Wohlers, who had a 2.54 ERA in the second half of 2002, will serve as Baez' top set-up man while David Riske, Chad Paronto, and lefthander Carl Sadler will be asked to contribute heavily in the sixth, seventh, and eighth innings. Versatile lefthander Terry Mulholland will pitch in a variety of roles – long and situational relief along with an occasional spot start. Aaron Myette, Jake Westbrook, Jerrod Riggan, Dave Elder, Jose Santiago, Alex Herrera, Dave Burba, and Lance Caraccioli will be given ample opportunities this spring to make the Major League club.

I am very much looking forward to guiding this group of players. I believe our mix of veteran and young players will provide our fanbase with an exciting style of baseball that will produce many intriguing storylines for the 2003 season and begin to establish the foundation for the next sustained championship run at Jacobs Field.





## RICARDO RODRIGUEZ

Acquired last summer from Los Angeles in the deal for Paul Shuey, the righthander has gone 38-19 with a 3.06 ERA in the Minors. *Baseball America* called Rodriguez the Dodgers No. 1 prospect after he was named the 2001 Class AA Florida State League and Dodgers Minor League "Pitcher of the Year" when he went 14-6 with a 3.21 ERA. The 24-year-old Dominican held right-handed batters to a .121 average and was 2-2 in seven starts after being called up by the Indians. Scouts say he has above average control – for the way he mixes a mid-90s fastball, good curve, and adequate change – but rave over his willingness to challenge hitters on the inside part of the plate. "I have to pitch inside, show the hitters that I am in command," said Rodriguez. "I learned that from Ramon Martinez (older brother of Red Sox star Pedro). You can't pitch scared and I won't."



Photo: Gregory Drezdson

## C.C. SABATHIA

Considered the Indians top pitching prospect in decades when drafted in the first round in 1998, the 6-foot-7 lefty with the 98 mph fastball and knee-buckling curve made the Majors at age 20 in 2001. He went 17-5 as a rookie, won another game in the post season, and drew comparisons to Herb Score and Randy Johnson. He arrived at 2002 Spring Training looking more like Shawn Kemp. "I didn't come to camp prepared last year," he admitted. "Everything had come too easy." Through July, he was 6-9 with a 4.92 ERA. Then he went 7-2 with a 2.94 ERA. "I want to pitch all this season like I finished last year," said Sabathia, who slimmed down with a vigorous off-season conditioning program. Now, he's hungry to live up to his No. 1 billing. "I got a wake-up call last year," he said. "I'm not going to shy away from being the ace of the staff. I want the pressure of pitching in big games."



## BRIAN TALLET

Drafted in the second round in 2000 after helping Louisiana State win the NCAA championship, the lefty led the Class A Carolina League in strikeouts in 2001 with 164 in 160 innings while walking only 34. He pitched well at Akron and Buffalo in 2002, earning a call to the Indians. He pitched six shutout innings in his big-league debut in Boston and went 1-0 with a 1.50 ERA in two games overall for Cleveland. Scouts like his mound presence and ability to mix a low-90s fastball and deceiving changeup. *Baseball America* ranked him fifth among prospects in overall command. Fans on the road heckle him about wearing his pants very high. The style has become a superstition. "Being as tall as I am (6' 7"), I had trouble finding pants my size," the 25-year-old said. "I started it at Akron, went 2-1 and was promoted to Buffalo. Then I got to the Majors. I just want to keep it going."



Photo: Gregory Drezdson

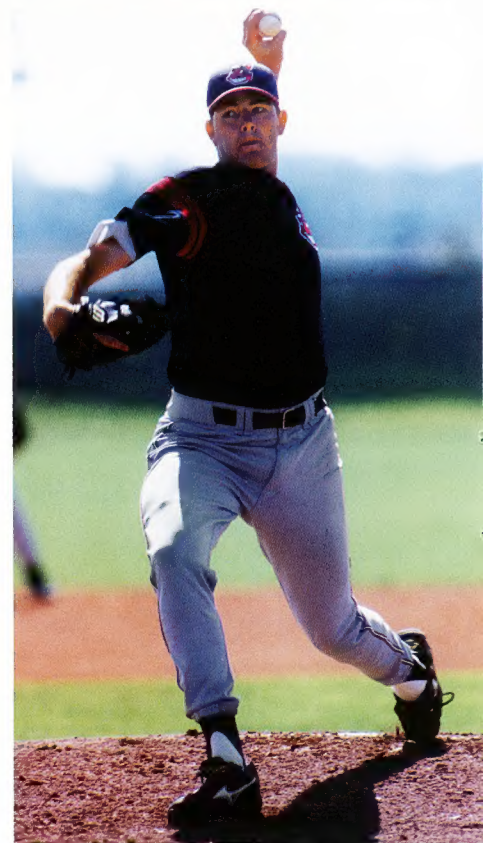


Photo: Gregory Drezdson





# Hall-of-Fame Bound

by Chuck Murr

No ballplayer ever epitomized Teddy Roosevelt's motto better than Eddie Murray, the Indians hitting coach who always spoke softly and carried a big stick.

This summer, Murray will become the 25th Indians player to be enshrined in the Baseball Hall of Fame. Only 2-1/2 of his 21 seasons as a player were in a Cleveland uniform, but what a glorious time it was. Murray was the veteran catalyst who helped transform the Indians into baseball's dominant team of the mid-1990s.

"That was a fun time," Murray said. "It was a wild and energetic group. I'm there trying to teach them a few things and I got caught up in what they were doing."

Murray made such an important contribution that Mark Shapiro's first big move upon becoming Indians general manager was to bring him back to Cleveland. When Murray was hired as the Indians hitting coach on November 14, 2001, nobody had better credentials for the job.

"Eddie Murray is one of the most respected and professional individuals in Major League Baseball," Shapiro said then. "The contributions he made as a player to the game and specifically to the Indians organization were immense. It is an honor to bring him back."

Shapiro was happy this past January when Murray became the 38th player voted into the Hall in his first year of eligibility.

"When you examine Eddie's production you realize that he not only belongs in the Hall of Fame, but he is one of the elite members," Shapiro said. "When I was a boy, Eddie was a role model because of his analytical approach to the game, his love of the game. He had an intelligent way of playing baseball and was always studious. His dedication and preparation were attributes that I admired and have tried to emulate in my own career."

Murray, never one to show much emotion on the field, had his excitement tempered on the day his election was announced. It coincided with the funeral of his sister, who passed away at age 38.

"I am thrilled by the tremendous honor of being elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame and joining the other greats of the game," Murray said in a statement released by the Indians. "For those with whom I shared space on the playing field and in the clubhouse, I share this honor with you."

"Unfortunately, I cannot speak with you today because of the passing last week of my younger sister Tanja after her long-fought battle with kidney disease. Although I dedicated my professional career to the game, I have dedicated my life to my family. The elation I feel by being recognized for my achievements on the field is overshadowed by the anguish of losing someone so dear to me. Once again, thank you for this incredible honor and I appreciate your understanding during this most difficult time."

Murray compiled a career average of .287 with 560 doubles, 504 homers, and 1,917 RBI over 3,026 games from 1977 through 1997, mostly with the Baltimore Orioles. He is the all-time career leader among switch-hitters in RBI, ranking seventh overall. He and Pete Rose are the only switch-hitters with more than 3,000 hits; he and Mickey Mantle are the only switch-hitters with more than 500 homers. He also is the career leader in games played at

first base (2,413) and the only player with at least 75 RBI a season for 20 consecutive years.

He has fond memories of playing in Cleveland.

"I came over here at the ripe old age of . . . let's see . . . 30-something," Murray recalled of signing as a 38-year-old free agent in 1994. "And I got rejuvenated. It was fun. I saw guys running and I started going first to third because I wanted to be part of it. I liked every bit of my time here."

Murray helped bring Cleveland its first AL pennant in 41 years back in 1995 when he batted .323 with 21 homers and 82 RBI. It was during that magical 1995 season that he got his 3,000th hit, off Mike Trombley in Minnesota on June 30.

"I liked going for it more than I thought I would," Murray recalled. "They put up that banner at Jacobs Field, and every time I got a hit, they'd take a number down – and the fans would cheer. You know what made it really special? How the fans wanted me to get the record. I was amazed at how hard they pulled for me. It was really a moving experience each time."



Photo: Gregory Drezdson



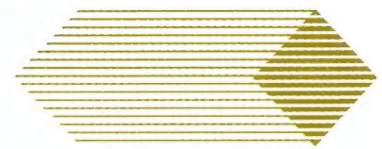
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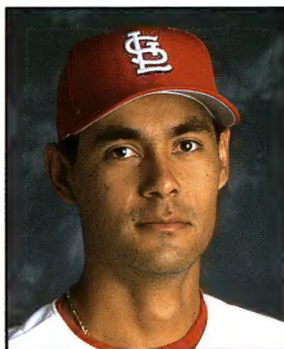


**32 Alex Escobar**

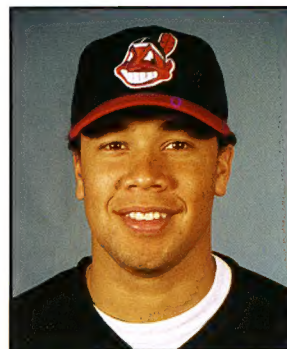
Age: 24, born September 6, 1978  
in Valencia, Venezuela  
Position: Outfielder  
B-T: R-R Ht: 6'1" Wt: 190

**20 Karim Garcia**

Age: 27, born October 29, 1975  
in Ciudad Obregon, Mexico  
Position: Outfielder  
B-T: L-L Ht: 6'0" Wt: 210

**69 Luis Garcia**

Age: 24, born November 5, 1978  
in Guadalajara, Mexico  
Position: Outfielder  
B-T: R-R Ht: 6'4" Wt: 190

**68 Jody Gerut**

Age: 25, born September 18,  
1977 in Elmhurst, IL  
Position: Outfielder  
B-T: L-L Ht: 6'0" Wt: 190

**67 Jeremy Guthrie**

Age: 23, born April 8, 1979 in  
Roseburg, OR  
Position: Pitcher  
B-T: R-R Ht: 6'1" Wt: 200

**12 Ricky Gutierrez**

Age: 32, born May 23, 1970 in  
Miami, FL  
Position: Infielder  
B-T: R-R Ht: 6'1" Wt: 195

**9 Travis Hafner**

Age: 25, born June 3, 1977 in  
Jamestown, ND  
Position: Infielder  
B-T: L-R Ht: 6'3" Wt: 240

**50 Alex Herrera**

Age: 26, born November 5, 1976  
in Maracaibo, Venezuela  
Position: Pitcher  
B-T: L-L Ht: 5'11" Wt: 190



Photo: Gregory Drezdzen